



Memo To: House Finance Committee

From: Angela Lima, Chief of Government Relations, Women's Fund of Rhode Island

Date: Apr 14, 2026

Concerns: **SUPPORT FOR H-8178,H-8145,H-8202,H-8315,H-8317, H-8369**

We at the Women's Fund of Rhode Island stand in support of H-8178, H-8145, H-8202, H-8315, H-8317 and H-8369. Rhode Island Public Transit passes as a crucial way to improve congestion, reduce emissions, and increase Rhode Island's competitiveness as a business-friendly destination.

Reliable and affordable public transit is a fundamental part of economic stability and community well-being. The Rhode Island Public Transit Authority, or RIPTA, provides essential access to jobs, education, healthcare, and childcare for thousands of Rhode Islanders. For many residents—particularly women, caregivers, and low-income individuals—public transit is not optional; it is a lifeline.

Women are disproportionately impacted by gaps in transit service. They are more likely to work in lower-wage jobs with nontraditional hours, rely on public transportation for caregiving responsibilities, and make multiple stops throughout the day. When transit is underfunded or unreliable, it creates real barriers to economic opportunity and daily stability.

That is why we strongly support the SAVE RIPTA campaign's legislative priorities, including reversing proposed service cuts (H-8317), increasing RIPTA's share of the Highway Maintenance Account (H-8178), reallocating rideshare sales tax revenue to public transit (H-8145), advancing a Transit Master Plan through a bond referendum (H-8202), increasing the car inspection fee to support transit funding (H-8369) and Motor Fuel Tax- Index Allocation to RIPTA (H-8315). Together, these proposals represent a comprehensive and sustainable approach to funding public transportation in Rhode Island.

The SAVE RIPTA campaign recognizes that investing in transit is investing in people. Stable, long-term funding for RIPTA would help ensure consistent service, reduce wait times, and expand access to underserved communities. This is especially important for those who already face systemic barriers, including women of color, immigrant communities, and single-parent households.

We also want to emphasize that transportation equity is directly connected to civic participation. When people cannot reliably get to work, school, or even polling locations, their ability to fully participate in society—including our democracy—is impacted.

For these reasons, we urge you to support the SAVE RIPTA priority campaign and advance these critical pieces of legislation. Doing so will promote economic security, gender equity, and a more connected and resilient state.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

The mission of the Women's Fund of Rhode Island is to invest in women and girls through advocacy, research, and strategic partnership designed to achieve gender equity through systemic change. Our [Women's Well-Being Index](#) compares how well women fare against men on topics related to health, safety, economic security, education and civic participation in every RI city/town. Our [policy briefs](#) are written in response to the data found on the Index. You can find more about our work at www.wfri.org.